

February 2014

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Next Broadway Voices show Feb. 8. See page 3.



Police station project progresses. See page 4.

TOWN HALL CALENDAR

Feb. 10: Planning Commission meeting (7 p.m.)

Feb. 18 Town Council meeting (7 p.m.)

Feb. 25: Town Council work session (6 p.m.)

March 3: Town Council meeting (7 p.m.)

Meetings are in the Council Chambers in building B at Town Hall, 900 Seventh Ave. Town Council meetings are recorded and broadcast (not live) on GTV (Time Warner 11, AT&T U-verse 99).



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GARNER UPDATE

Vol. 62, No. 68



The Garner Veterans Memorial, located in the Town of Garner's Lake Benson Park, has won an award of excellence from the Architectural Precast Association.

Garner Veterans Memorial Wins Architectural Award

The Garner Veterans Memorial has won a Design and Manufacturing Excellence Award from the Architectural Precast Association.

Clearscapes of Raleigh, the architecture and design firm responsible for design of the memorial, submitted the application for the award.

The purpose of the awards program "is to recognize excellence in design, manufacturing and craftsmanship of architectural precast concrete structures and individual components," the APA website says.

"This really wowed us," the awards jury said in comments about the memorial. "Precast concrete panels designed to simulate the area's indigenous red clay is highly imaginative. Reflection and awareness of [the] past is greatly stimulated with this architecture."

Garner resident and Clearscapes architect Mon Peng Yueh was the primary designer of the memorial. Thomas Sayre, an internationally renowned artist and Clearscapes principal, created the earcast sculptures that make up part of the memorial panels.

The Garner Veterans Memorial Committee oversaw the citizen-driven project to fruition. Through a grassroots fundraising effort, the committee raised half a million dollars to get the memorial and its Walkway of Honor built. The memorial was dedicated last May.

The memorial, located in the Town of Garner's Lake Benson Park (921 Buffalo Road), was one of the three main projects featured in Garner's winning All-America City campaign last year.



Learn more about Garner's All-America City campaign at garnernc.gov.



A Message from the Mayor



Watch the mayor's State of the Town address at youtube.com/townofgarner.

I hope you were able to come to the Black History Month events at GPAC on Feb. 1. It was a real treat to get to see Mike Wiley perform then meet and talk with several former Negro Leagues ball players from North Carolina.



Those events, and the recent award bestowed on the Garner Veterans Memorial, remind

me that we are a community that honors our past—but we're also a forward-looking community.

This is something I can't stress enough. Yes, we remember our history and work to pass it along to the younger generations, but we also are striving toward a better future with things such as GPAC and all the terrific programming there, and White Deer Park Nature Center and its mission to educate citizens about the environment and sustainable living.

In Garner, we have a knowledge of who we are and where we've come from—and a vision of where we want to go. I'm thankful that we have both an understanding of our past and our eyes turned toward the future. Not every community can legitimately claim that. It guarantees that Garner will become an even greater place to be.

Ronnie S. Williams

Garner to Partner with Agency to Hold Job Search 'Boot Camp'

The Town of Garner will partner with the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency (NCHFA) and Professionals in Transition, a workforce development non-profit organization, to hold a free Job Search Boot Camp for the citizens of Garner and surrounding communities. The event will feature two learning sessions.

"The Town of Garner is proud to spearhead this initiative," Mayor Ronnie Williams said. "Although this state has been faced with economic hardship, the Town of Garner is committed to helping our citizens sustain employment."

J. Damian Birkel, certified career counselor and founder of Professionals in Transition, will teach participants how to market themselves competitively, capitalize on their existing skills and discover ways to make the most of job search resources. NCHFA will also hold an informational session about the N.C. Foreclosure Prevention Fund. The Foreclosure Prevention Fund is a state-administered program fund-

ed by the U.S. Department of the Treasury. It provides zero-interest, deferred loans of up to \$36,000 to North Carolina homeowners who are struggling to make mortgage payments due to job loss or other financial hardships.

The Job Search Boot Camp will be held Tuesday, Feb. 25 at Garner Performing Arts Center (742 W. Garner Road). The first session will be 11 a.m.–2:30 p.m. Lunch will be provided for participants. The second session will be 6 p.m.–8:30 p.m. with light refreshments. An inclement weather alternative date is scheduled on Tuesday, March 11.

Pre-registration is not mandatory but is encouraged. The deadline to pre-register is Wednesday, Feb. 19 at 5 p.m. All pre-registrants will receive a free copy of Birkel's book, "The Job Search Checklist."

For more information or to register, visit <http://garnerjobsearchbootcamp.eventbrite.com> or call (919) 981-2607.

Town Manager Earns Prestigious ICMA Designation

Garner Town Manager Hardin Watkins recently received the credentialed manager designation from the International City/County Management Association (ICMA). He is now one of over 1,300 local government management professionals credentialed through the



ICMA Voluntary Credentialing Program.

To receive the prestigious ICMA credential, a member must have significant experience as a senior management executive in local government; have earned a degree, preferably in public administration or a related field; and have demonstrated a commitment to high standards of integrity and to lifelong learning and professional development.

Watkins has 24 years of local government executive experience. Prior to becoming Garner's town manager in 2007, he served as city manager of Suwanee, Ga., for nine and a half years.



Former Ballplayers Bring History to Life at GPAC

Former Negro Leagues baseball players Carl Long (pictured), Ken Free Sr. and Hubert 'Big Daddy' Wooten were on hand for a meet-and-greet on Feb. 1 to kick off Black History Month at GPAC. The event followed Mike Wiley's inspiring one-man, interactive performance of his play "A Game Apart." An exhibition of Negro Leagues jerseys and educational panels remains on display throughout the month of February in the GPAC front lobby, which is open Monday through Friday from 1:30-5 p.m.



UPCOMING EVENTS



Tony-Nominated Broadway Singer Comes to GPAC Feb. 8

Norm Lewis performs Saturday, Feb. 8 at 7:30 p.m. in the next installment of the award-winning Broadway Voices series. Lewis has been seen in films, on television and on Broadway, opera and concert halls around the country and world. He was nominated for a Tony Award for his performance in Gershwin's "Porgy and Bess" with Audra McDonald at the Richard Rogers Theater. He just returned from a highly successful year's run in London playing the role of Javert in the West End's "Les Miserables" and played the same role for The 25th Anniversary Concert at the O 2 Arena. Tickets for the GPAC show are \$35 and are available at garnerperformingartscenter.com.



Revered Blues Guitarist Cool John Ferguson to Play GPAC

Blues musician Cool John Ferguson comes to GPAC for a special evening on Saturday, Feb. 22 at 7:30 p.m. Ferguson, considered one of the world's greatest living blues guitarists, has played major blues festivals throughout the United States and abroad, including the Savannah Music Festival, Lincoln Center Out-Of-Doors, Lucerne Blues Festival and Switzerland's Blues to Bop Festival. Tickets are \$15 and can be purchased by visiting garnerperformingartscenter.com.



Come See Garner's Annual Showcase of Talent March 1

Come on out to GPAC on Saturday, March 1 to see Garner's most talented performers of all ages. The Showcase of Talent in past years has featured the likes of Scotty McCreery and Arlie Hon-eycutt, among many other outstanding performing artists. Shows are at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., and they're FREE.



Masters of Soul Bring Motown Sounds to Garner March 8

Masters of Soul is a celebration of the great Motown and soul recording artists. The group's show features stylishly costumed, fully choreographed tributes to male and female groups backed by a live band. Masters of Soul perform at GPAC Saturday, March 8 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$20 and are available at garnerperformingartscenter.com.



You can follow GPAC on Twitter (@GPACGarner) and Facebook.



Garner Native to Head Engineering Dept.

Garner native Tony Chalk will have the opportunity to serve his hometown in a new capacity.

Chalk last week accepted the Town's offer to serve as town engineer. He was promoted from assistant town engineer following the retirement of former town engineer Frank Powell. Chalk's promotion was effective Monday, Feb. 3.

A lifelong Garner resident, Chalk grew up in the Cloverdale neighborhood and is a proud graduate of Garner Magnet High School (Class of 1979). He has a Bachelor of Science degree in civil engineering from N.C. State University and holds certifications as a professional engineer and professional land surveyor. He has worked for the Town since 1989.

"Tony is extremely qualified and knowledgeable and will continue to serve the Town with the same passion and dedication he has demonstrated since 1989," Mayor Ronnie Williams said. "His experience and professionalism will serve our citizens well. I am proud to congratulate Tony and excited about the opportunity to work with him as



Garner native Tony Chalk, who has been with the Town for over 24 years, has taken over the reins of the Engineering Department.

town engineer."

Town Manager Hardin Watkins said Chalk has a unique understanding of the community from having grown up in Garner and having already served the Town for 24-plus years. He said Chalk is well suited for leading

the Engineering Department during Garner's next phase of growth.

As the head of his department, Chalk will initiate and lead the search for the Town's next assistant town engineer beginning immediately.

TOWN OF GARNER BOND PROGRAM

Town Moving Forward on Police Station Project

Pictured is an artist's rendering of the planned Garner Police Department headquarters, expected to be completed in spring 2015. The new headquarters, part of the \$35.7 million bond program overwhelmingly approved by Garner voters last March, will be located at 912 Seventh Ave. in a renovated building the Town purchased at a deeply discounted price. The architects for the project, ADW Architects, have completed design/development drawings and are moving forward with construction drawings. Renderings of the project are on display in the lobby of Town Hall's building B and at the police station, both located at 900 Seventh Ave.



For more information on the Garner Bond Program, visit garnerbonds.com.